

From left: bridge on Deptford Creekside, linking Greenwich and Deptford, Sir Michael Wilshaw the chief inspector at Ofsted, and India Gate in the heart of Delhi

Monday, September 17,
www.feweek.co.uk

Jason Holt ~ his story



The author of the independent
review into SME apprenticeships

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inside...

Focus on 'Deptford not Delhi' says Ofsted chief

Chris Henwood

@chris_henwood

Colleges could be at risk of focusing on international opportunities to the detriment of home-grown learners, Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw has warned.

The former head teacher and executive principal spoke on the dangers of foreign recruitment in FE at a conference organised by the Association of Colleges (AoC). His remarks came in an introductory speech to around 160 delegates at the event, held on Monday last week at Prospero House, London Bridge.

Conference-goers, who were banned from live tweeting, later told *FE Week* that the chief inspector questioned the drive of colleges to increase their intakes from abroad, questioning whether the focus should be on "Deptford not Delhi".

They also told *FE Week*, which was subject to a press ban for the event, that Sir Michael spoke of supporting colleges in their concerns over inspections.

His warning on looking abroad came just five months after former FE Minister John Hayes launched the FE Global Strategy.

The AoC had played a key role in developing the strategy at the request of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

In December, BIS said in its *New Challenges, New Chances* report: "Although currently higher education is by far the largest export market, there is significant emerging demand and potential for technician and higher level vocational skills, which are widely recognised as essential to sustain balanced economic growth."

"Further education exports are already valued at £1 billion a year."

The report added: "We want to ensure that FE is in the strongest possible position to take advantage of these opportunities and punch its weight internationally."

And even the AoC itself has taken a lead on capitalising on foreign potential with its move to create an India Office for recruitment on behalf of subscribing colleges.

But Joy Mercer, AoC policy direc-

tor, defended moves abroad.

"It's clear to us that colleges are businesses and they need to be business-like if they are to effectively deliver quality to their students," she said.

"The government's report called for a global education strategy that's very much about providing opportunities to our students and our colleges on an international stage.

"For colleges that engage in international work there's no evidence it diminishes the quality of education at the time of inspection."

An Ofsted spokesperson declined *FE Week's* request for a copy of Sir Michael's speech.

However, Miss Mercer said she welcomed a commitment from Sir Michael to put FE inspections "on a level playing field" with those for schools. "But we are disappointed this won't happen until the new inspection framework for schools, in 2016," she said.

"One such disadvantage against schools is the fact colleges' data registers student retention levels, whereas schools don't."

AoC ban delegates from tweeting

A Twitter ban at Sir Michael Wilshaw's Ofsted conference was defended by organisers as a "courtesy to the press".

The clampdown on live information escaping Prospero House had already seen journalists barred from the event.

The behind-closed-doors ruling was justified by Association of Colleges (AoC) communications director Ben Verinder as allowing contributors an "open and frank" dialogue.

"Traditional and social media coverage of the relationship between colleges and Ofsted is essential to a healthy debate," he said.

"However, there are occasions when members need and deserve to be able to talk directly to Ofsted without media presence, in order to have an open and frank dialogue.

"The audience was asked not to

tweet during the proceedings as a courtesy to media that had asked to attend.

"It would not be fair or reasonable to expect a media outlet not to attend, while the content of the discussions was entering the public domain at the same moment."

Joy Mercer, AoC policy director, added that press were not normally allowed at their events, which can cost up to £468 a-head.

"We don't normally have any media at these conferences," she said. "We want people to be able to be unattributable. It gives people that freedom to have that dialogue.

"Any review of this policy would have to be carried out by Ben Verinder and our chief executive Martin Doel. But at the moment we feel it [press ban] is exactly what our members want."

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@insiderjo, Will Littlejohn – #Ofsted: to test current independence of Wilshaw, look back at nature of past relationships of HMCIs to SoS.



@ChildhoodinEY, from Leeds – Discussion Point: do #ofsted know the difference between good practice and satisfactory practice?



@montfordmiffy, Clare Williams – Info from Ofsted training - You will get 1 days notice for a 2 day inspection. No phonecall on thurs or fri. No inspection on a Mon



@pippamint, Vicki Mawson – Just been through new #ofsted inspection. Got good. Phew



@GarsideGolcar, Stephen Garside – So difficult to forgive #Labour for two wars, PFI, bringing privatisation to prisons, NHS and education. For not getting rid of #ofsted

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Plans for audit of 'rip-off' provider fees shelved

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Plans for a government clampdown on "rip-off" provider fees have been shelved as industry leaders look at self-regulation.

The Skills Funding Agency had said providers who subcontracted would need to prove they weren't charging excessive management fees.

But its plans to introduce stricter controls, revealed in *FE Week* in July, were dropped in favour of input from within the industry.

That input, due from December, will come from the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and the Association of Colleges (AoC).

An agency spokesperson said: "We are continuing to work with the sector on a range of issues relating to effective supply chain management.

"An external advisory group is currently working with the agency to assess how to effectively implement this.

"We have agreed not to invoke this particular clause until the work is complete.

"This has been communicated to all providers and as soon as the work of the advisory group has been completed, the outcomes will be shared with the sector."

One subcontractor, who wanted to remain anonymous, spoke to *FE Week* in June, branding some FE college fees a "rip-off".

And Sally Garbett, an independent consultant and trainer for Read On Publications,

told *FE Week* the following month: "One FE college hiked their management fees from 20 to 30 per cent this year and will now retain £1.9m of the 16 to 18 apprenticeship funding.

It had got nearly £5m for 16 to 18 apprentices.

"I find it hard to think that any admin operation could cost £1.9m. And I know that the advice and support they provide amounts to little more than quarterly visits and administrative monitoring."

However, the days of such fees could be numbered as the agency gets advice on management issues.

Paul Warner, director of employment and skills at the AELP, said: "It was a very positive step by the agency to take these proposals off the table while the advisory group is still undertaking its work.

"This will give the sector an opportunity to come up with solutions that avoid burdening colleges and providers with costs that take money away from frontline training - and this, after all, is what the issue is about.

"I am confident that we are well on course to produce an accord that will help to put an end to poor practice while safeguarding legitimate business arrangements between providers."

An AoC spokesperson added: "We advocate sector-led self-regulation rather than mandatory structures.

"We are working hard with AELP to ensure that best practices are shared across all providers who sub-contract any of their funding."

Failed SFA research tender 'ridiculous'

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A 33-day timescale for research into a new payments regime for adult learning has been branded "ridiculous" by an FE consultant.

Fourteen contractors were invited to bid for the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) project, but not one went for it.

Ian Nash, a member of The Policy Consortium, said the timescale was "inadequate. The people who set these deadlines ought to try to do what they ask."

The agency has now revealed that after "helpful feedback", the job would be put back out to tender with "revised" specifications and a new deadline of December.

"Following the recent tender exercise and the helpful feedback received from two of the 14 providers within the framework for contractors in category two - economic and econometric forecasting analysis - we are reviewing the tender specification," said an agency spokesperson.

"We plan to issue a revised specification with a completion deadline of December."

The initial tender for research into a single rate for English and maths called for at least 70 interviews.

Industry insiders, including college heads and teachers and stakeholder organisations,

were to be quizzed and the report was to include conclusions and recommendations.

Mr Nash said: "We have been in contact with organisations that would have considered bidding. The reasons they did not is clear.

"First, the timeframe was ridiculous. Has anyone in SFA tried to get hold of people for interview in 33 days?

"That sounds a long time, but in practice, as such organisations repeatedly tell us, it's inadequate to set up and carry out interviews from cold, especially where senior managers are concerned. Their diaries are usually committed far in advance.

"Second, employers, teachers and managers are busy; they are not sitting around waiting to be interviewed.

"And third, they tell us that when they do get the time, other more important things get in their way - like running their business and teaching their students.

"Moreover, to try to achieve this at the beginning of an academic year when staff are frantically appraising, enrolling and inducting learners suggests these people have much to learn about in the world of education and training."

He said there was also scepticism that "too much of such work related to ministerial whims and departmental world views, rather than finding real evidence".

FE Week news in brief EO tender winners

Siemens and Nissan are among the first companies to take part in a £165m skills drive.

The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills has revealed the initial wave of companies that will take part in a pilot for Employer Ownership, (EO) a scheme that aims to find ways to improve workforce skills.

The programme offers all the employers a share of £67m. They add to the funding by investing a combined total of £98m to design and deliver their own training solutions. More successful bidders will be announced in October.

Age lowered for account

The lower age limit for lifelong learning accounts has been cut from 18 to 16.

A spokesperson for the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills said the move followed feedback from the sector.

Young people aged 16 or more and living in England now can register for an account through the National Careers Service website.

It provides access to a range of information and tools that can be saved in a secure, private and online space.

ESOL consultation

A consultation on English lessons for speakers of other languages has been launched.

The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) is looking at creating a new qualification.

Consultation events are planned in Belfast, Leeds and London in November.

It has invited input from the public before Monday, December 3.

Visit www.ofqual.gov.uk for more details.

Another student satisfaction website launches

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A new Ofsted website measuring student satisfaction has entered the market, prompting concerns of a clash with the Skills Funding Agency's £30m FE Choices site.

Learner View (right), which went live in time for Ofsted's 2012/13 inspections, draws together the opinions of students about their courses and comes up with provider ratings.

Students are faced with statements such as 'my course/programme meets my needs' and 'I receive the support I need to help me progress'. It then offers responses ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

The public will be able to see the results once there has been "sufficient" response.

The agency's FE Choices, formerly Developing Framework for Excellence, also produces provider ratings, but based on the findings of a research company that carries out its own interviews.

But it is understood that at last week's Association of Colleges' conference on Ofsted inspections questions were asked about the similarities of the two sites.

However, an Ofsted spokesperson pointed to a number of differences between it and FE

Choices. "Our website is targeted at inspections – that's the major difference. We've both got different ends" she said.

"FE Choices is more about pitting provider against provider and giving prospective students information that will help them to make a decision about where they want to go.

"Learner View is to do with students already enrolled and getting their views and inputting them into what we do."

Delegates at the conference heard how Learner View questionnaires were open all year round, but providers would be requested to tell learners about the site by the end of the second day of inspection.

They also heard how the results would feed into annual risk assessments, alongside other evidence, to help decide which providers were inspected and when.

Plus, inspectors could view and analyse the latest results during the inspection.

Toni Pearce, National Union of Students vice president with responsibility for FE, welcomed Learner View.

"We are pleased that Ofsted has recognised the need to review its methods for consulting learners," she said.

"Learner View represents an opportunity for the learner voice to become properly embedded into inspection processes, which is

particularly important as we move towards more 'light touch' inspections, and where continuous audit of provision will be crucial in ensuring that learners get a fair deal.

"It is particularly welcome that it will be open continuously to contributions from learners, whether or not their college or

learning provider is being inspected and whatever age they happen to be, and that live view data will be made available.

"These are important steps towards protecting all learners against poor provision."

Learner View is due to be launched officially later this month.



Ofsted launch Learner View website: <http://learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk/>

Group Training Associations 'the answer to skills gap'

Chris Henwood

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A dying breed of business link-ups offering their own apprenticeships could hold the key to bridging the country's skills gap, an inquiry has concluded.

Group Training Associations (GTAs) came under the spotlight of an independent commission headed by Professor Lorna Unwin, from the Institute of Education.

Her report has called for more use to be made of GTAs, almost 50 years after the not-for-profit organisations were introduced.

At their height there were around 150 associations, but that figure has fallen more than 70 per cent with historic contractions of the manufacturing sector. Those remaining are mainly in the north of England and the Midlands.

"These associations should be central to the Government's plans for economic growth, rebalancing the economy, increasing the stocks of technician and higher level skills, and the expansion and improvement of apprenticeships," said Prof Unwin.

"They play a strategic role . . . by monitoring and meeting the challenge posed by skills gaps and shortages.

"Their focus on specific areas of skill means that they have a great depth of knowledge and capacity to develop occupational expertise."

Mark Maudsley, chief executive of umbrella group GTA England, welcomed the report and said: "Our board fully endorses the commission's report and its recommendations were accepted by GTA England members at a members' day meeting in July."

The associations deliver intermediate and advanced apprenticeships with a high level of technical content, typically lasting two to four years and involving substantial off-the-job training.

They also deliver other forms of high quality training at level three and above.

Prof Unwin further recommended that GTAs should move into sectors that have not previously benefited from their involvement.

However, the commission's report also noted that associations and GTA England would need government support. They operate within a "fiercely competitive marketplace", the report said, where they did not have access to the capital funds available to FE colleges.

It also noted some colleges that subcontract the delivery of vocational education to GTAs hold back between 15 and 40 per cent of the funds they received from the Skills Funding Agency as a management fee.

A fairer funding system would enable GTAs to deliver vocational qualifications – outside apprenticeships – up to and including Higher National Diplomas, she said.

She added: "It would also provide capital funding to sustain and upgrade GTA facilities and equipment."

In many cases, some associations set up centres to meet the need for such training, while some have collaborated with FE colleges and other training providers.

Other members of the commission included figures from the Prospects Learning Foundation, Wider Healthcare Teams Education, University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust, Rolls-Royce, TUC, Edge Foundation and ATG Training.

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FE Week investigates

Audits fail to stop missing data

Chris Henwood

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Regular checks failed to stop hundreds of apprenticeship providers missing a government target for tracking student employment last year, the Skills Funding Agency has admitted.

The providers, who also faced audits, missed the target for keeping a check on whether apprentices had jobs last academic year.

This failure of 340 providers, as revealed by *FE Week* last Monday, hampered the government's attempts to track how up to 30,000 students were getting on in their hunt for apprenticeship-linked work.

The agency and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) did not say what, if any, action had been taken.

"Providers are subject to regular performance monitoring and audits," said an agency spokesperson, who was also speaking on behalf of the NAS. "Where a provider is

unable to evidence that they have complied with the agency's funding rules, then we will take appropriate action to protect public funding."

The apprentice job data differentiates between apprenticeships where students are registered as unemployed and ones where they have a job.

One training provider Zenos, now owned by Pearson and operating as Pearson in Practice, came under fire earlier this year when it emerged that no apprentice was guaranteed a job at the end of their 39-week course. Students also spent fewer than six months with an employer.

A spokesperson for Zenos, which got £45.5 million of taxpayers' money in 2011-12 for running apprentice schemes, said at the time that its long-term commitment was "to equip young people with the skills and ability ... to compete in a highly competitive marketplace".

Nevertheless, individual learner records (ILRs) for an estimated 30,000 students were returned to the Information Authority (IA) with "not known", "not provided" or

"missing" in the employment status box last academic year, *FE Week* revealed last week.

The government's target is for more than 99 per cent of providers' ILRs to be filled in with apprentices' employment status.

The IA website specifies that apprenticeship providers must aim to have less than 0.3 per cent unknown on the first day of learning.

Providers with more than 0.5 per cent unknown in-year would be "asked to ensure this improves by the end of year return", according to the website.

But the job status of 4.5 per cent of the overall number of apprentices was not known last year.

Liam Burns, president of the National Union of Students, said that the failure of 340 providers to meet the target had affected the government's ability to check the performance of training providers.

He called for "urgent action" to make providers complete ILRs with the employment information.

"It is deeply worrying that targets for collecting basic data have been missed and,

as a result, the employment statuses of tens of thousands of apprentices now appear unaccounted for," he said.

"The government must urgently take action to ensure public money spent on training providers who make claims about getting students into work is checked against hard evidence."

His call was backed by Gordon Marsden, shadow FE minister, who described the job status information as a "safeguard for learners".

"It's a check on concerns about deadweight learning and money being spent on courses with a view to employment. It's also a safeguard for learners in ensuring due diligence with taxpayers' money," he said.

However, the agency spokesperson said the apprentice employment data was not linked to funding calculations.

"Providers are responsible for submitting accurate and timely data as specified by the Information Authority," she said. "The employer field is not linked to funding calculations for apprenticeships."

Corrections

Disappointed with "dissappointment"

Mistakes occasionally rear their ugly head in even the most experienced of journalists' 'copy' – and regrettably it's no different here at *FE Week* HQ.

Even the least eagle-eyed of readers would have spotted the headline howler on page two last week. The story, by Holly Welham, who takes no blame, told of Jason Holt's "dissappointment" at the government 'snubbing' his report.

What didn't he say?

As a former editor, Labour's shadow FE minister Gordon Marsden knows the stresses of journalists' deadlines.

He's also aware of the need for a close eye to be kept on subbing alterations. And thankfully, it was his dozen years at the helm of *History Today*, plus a spell at *New Socialist Magazine*, that informed his response to a quote wrongly attributed to him.

"As a former editor I know what it's like when journalists have to put stories together up against tight deadlines," the understanding Labour MP told *FE Week*.

The tale was Miss Welham's on page two again, and again she can be spared any blame. It included the quote in question, from Peter Cobrin, director of Apprenticeships England.

I before E except after ...

Classrooms up and down the country used to shake with the rote-learned din of "I before E, except after C".

Many will attest to the effectiveness of the technique, but it's unclear whether such learning had been experienced by the *FE Week* author of our next error.

Graham Hasting-Evans is a leading figure at the National Open College Network and he penned a page seven piece about functional skills, only for us to refer to him as a 'cheif executive'.

These three corrections were made in time for the electronic version of *FE Week*.

Ministers not responsible for institute

John Hayes may have left the FE building but he can still spark an industry debate.

In a page five article on his departure and legacy for sector, the Institute for Learning was said to be among, "a succession of institutions ... created by ministers to be 'run and owned by the sector'".

But the institute, *FE Week* is more than happy to point out, was not created by ministers. It was, in fact, created in 2002 as an independent professional body by FE teachers, unions and the Association of Colleges.

Thanks go to Sue Crowley, institute chair, for pointing out the inaccuracy.

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of *FE Week*?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is.

We'd be more than happy to give you a named credit should you wish. In which case, tell us who you are and where you work.

Email us at newsdesk@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.

Hancock rolls into action

Further education chief Matthew Hancock got his hands dirty at Number 10 Downing Street when he took on a sushi challenge.

The new minister was in the Prime Minister David Cameron's kitchens to meet apprentices from the food and grocery industry as part of Feeding Britain's Future – Skills for Work week.

Wearing gloves, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Skills attempted to make sushi rolls under the watchful eye of a fellow learner.

But he found time to tweet. "I'm learning to make sushi in the Downing Street kitchen with apprentices as part of the excellent Feeding Britain's Future," he wrote.

During the skills week, from September 17, youngsters will visit farms, factories, depots, shops and catering outlets to gain some of the skills they need to help them to get a job.

Joanne Denney-Finch OBE, chief executive of industry thinktank IGD, that was behind the campaign, said: "We were excited to go to Downing Street to show just what young people working with us have to offer.

"It was fantastic that Matthew Hancock took the time to meet with us and to talk to young people from the industry."

She added: "A career in food and grocery offers endless possibilities and fosters all kinds of talent.

"The industry takes people at all stages of life, from school-leavers to experienced graduates, and regardless of background and qualifications, it's possible to start on the bottom rung of the ladder and get to the very top.



Sushi time with Matthew Hancock
Pic: Crown Copyright

FE Week profile



Jason Holt ~ his story

Janet Murray

@jan_murray

The chief executive of Holts Group of Companies and author of the independent review into apprenticeship for small and medium-sized companies talks to FE Week

Jason Holt always wanted to run his own company and started to hone his entrepreneurial skills at an early age. Having worked out that baking horse chestnuts in the oven toughened up the shells, he spotted a business opportunity, flogging “unbreakable” conkers to classmates at Highgate School, in north London.

He later funded a gap year selling ice cream on a beach in the Canary Islands and importing boxer shorts – which had yet to take off in Spain – and selling them on to Spanish retailers.

It was a lucrative venture that came to an abrupt end when his business partner dumped him after working out he could make more money trading alone. Having learned his first tough lesson in business, Holt returned to the UK to start a degree in geography at Leeds University.

A law conversion course followed and Holt spent the three years working as an insolvency litigator for a City law firm “on a good day, winding up a company, making a man bankrupt or evicting someone from their home”.

While it was depressing at times, he admits he was fascinated by the reasons that companies failed. “I made it my business to ask them [the insolvency practitioners] why they thought it [the company] had failed...95 per cent of the time it was because of the business owner or managing director not being there physically or taking their eye off the ball, as opposed to being someone who just wasn’t good at their job,” he says.

But the job began to take its toll. “If you do that, day in, day out, you start to get very cynical about life,” he says. “Not only are you upsetting the business owners...your client isn’t happy because they are spending good money after bad to recover debt owed to them, so no one was happy to see me.”

The turning point came when his housemate – also a solicitor – was involved in a case where the person she had evicted from his home killed himself. “I could see how upset she was and I thought ‘that could be me one day’,” says Holt.

When his father asked him to join the family jewellery business in 1999, he decided to jump ship. “It was a big decision because there was a [legal] partnership in front of me, which is an extremely cushy number – albeit that you have to work extremely hard – whereas in business, you are at the mercy of whatever is thrown at you and you are much more exposed,” he says.

And as the boss’s son, he was acutely aware that he couldn’t just walk in and take over. “It would have been wrong to say to the staff, who had been there for so many years. ‘Here’s Jason, now he’s in charge.’ I didn’t know anything about jewellery or gemstones...who was I to say anything?” he says.

Holt spent the first few months observing and while he could see that Holts Gems – which had been in the family for 50 years – was a “solid business”, he had broader concerns about the future of the jewellery sector. “I remember seeing a report that said that future of the industry was on its knees, and without some serious training to bring in new blood, more and more products would be manufactured abroad,” he says.

As it happened, there were government regeneration grants galore at the time and Holt applied for £25,000 to set up a school to teach gem-cutting – one of the main functions of the business at the time – free to others in the trade. Industry colleagues were sceptical, arguing that sharing his staff’s skills and expertise could put the company out of business.

Ten years on, the training school – or Holts Academy as it is now known – has more than 1,000 students working towards level two and level three courses in everything from jewellery to business enterprise and is currently the only government accredited apprenticeship and vocational provider in the industry.

As a not-for-profit part of the business, the Holts Academy is “in a sense, a social enterprise”, which aims to help others and the jewellery industry as a whole, he says. “I think people have realised that, by sharing and collaborating, you are more likely to get a positive outcome for the sector than if you naval-gaze.”

Despite his achievements as an SME owner – Holts has grown from eight to 80 staff over the past decade – being asked to carry out a government review came as a shock.

He recalls: “The week they asked me, my wife and I went to Milan for our wedding anniversary and I probably bored her to death about it. We talked about it non-stop and agreed it was a great opportunity, a real honour...”

But the project, sold to him as “two-and-a-half days a week for a couple of months” (pro bono) quickly turned into “five days a week for five months”. And while the initial findings of his report – that employers are largely “clueless” about what apprentices are, how they are trained and how to hire them – came as no surprise to many in the sector, Holt says he sensed ministers were looking for something “much more radical,” particularly Michael Gove, the education secretary, who questioned the need for training providers in the delivery of apprenticeships in SMEs.

“We had this whole discussion and I was like: ‘In an ideal world, we wouldn’t need

providers, but if I asked an employer to take on an apprentice now, they wouldn’t know what to do’.”

While Holt doesn’t regret his decision to take on the review, he admits he is disappointed with parts of the government response to his report, particularly the reluctance to get schools involved in educating young people about apprenticeships and vocational careers.

Under new guidelines introduced this month, schools now have a statutory requirement to provide careers advice and guidance in schools, but like many in the sector, Holt is concerned about what this will mean in practice.

“From what I understand, this could be as little or as much as a person pointing young people to the National Careers Advice website...call me old-fashioned, but that to me isn’t careers advice.”

He also feels let down by the government’s “flat refusal” to rationalise on pre-apprenticeships, something he feels many young people would benefit from as part of their preparation for the workplace.

“I sensed ministers were looking for something much more radical”

“I think there is an issue with the supply of good candidates [for apprenticeships]. Colleges aren’t getting the quality of supply so they aren’t necessarily giving employers what they are looking for...but many colleges would argue that they are not paid to support an individual by getting them ready for employment.”

The Holt Review also highlighted the need to improve relationships between providers and employers. The National Apprenticeship Service could meet the needs of employers far more effectively by reducing the time it takes for vacancies to be approved and listed on the site (which can take up to a week at the moment).

He would also like to see a Trip Advisor-style website where employers could rate providers. “It’s a crude measure, but it’s how we look at things now...and why can’t we be consumers? Actually, I don’t see why it couldn’t fall to the private sector, which does it so elegantly. If you look at something like Hot Courses [which provides online information on school, college and university courses], it’s fantastic – they could do it with their eyes closed.”

While he admits he is still getting used to having a major government review named after him, he says there is still plenty to do.

He has agreed to be involved in a working group that will oversee the implementation of the review and has various meetings lined up with civil servants over the coming months.

“At the end of the day, the review is just a document that sits on the BIS website. But to be part of something that is changing so rapidly and is so positive for learners, communities and industry...it’s great and I feel privileged to be part of that.”

Changes to your PAYE



“There will be an additional cost of £150m to £200m a-year across the college sector”

The much-loved P35 is one of a host of forms on their way out under reforms of the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) system next year. Here, former Association of Colleges finance specialist Robert Russell looks at the issues those who hold the purse strings should be aware of.

Finance directors have to budget for all the “knowns” and “unknowns” as referred to by former United States Secretary for Defence Donald Rumsfeld, who said: “There are known knowns — there are things we know that we know.

“There are known unknowns — that is to say, there are things that we now know we don’t know. But there are also unknown unknowns — there are things we do not know we don’t know.” And it is the unknowns which so often cause finance departments angst.

Crossing the chairman of the board’s palm with silver might provide a short-term solution, but many find creating a contingency fund more pragmatic and less risky.

The following are changes to existing procedures which may affect budgets for the coming year, and ones that all finance directors should be aware of.

Her Majesty’s Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has determined that the existing PAYE system wasn’t operating as intended and it will be introducing Real Time Information (RTI) from April.

The reforms, with all employers using the new system from October 2013, will result in monthly reconciliation of pay records, replacing the annual reconciliation and potentially-affected cashflow.

The new system will see the abolition of the P35, P14, P46, P38a and P38. New forms coming in their place include full payment submission, employer alignment submission, employer payment summary, National Insurance verification number and earlier year update.

The move to RTI seems innocuous, but results in some surprising changes, including the introduction of reporting of payments below the National Insurance threshold, and HMRC state, “even if the amount is less than £20 a-month”, and the removal of P38s for students.

With regards auto enrolment, from October, the Pensions Act 2011 and The Automatic

Enrolment Regulations have established new deadlines for employers.

These were stretched for the smallest companies, but most colleges will have to comply at some point in 2013 — this staging is determined by payroll size.

The necessity of enrolling all eligible staff onto the local government pension scheme (LGPS) or teachers’ pension scheme (TPS) is likely to cost colleges quite a bit.

When auto enrolment was introduced in the US in 2006, pension take-up increased to 90 per cent from the previous 50 to 75 per cent.

Colleges, with about 60 per cent uptake of pensions currently, increasing to about 80 per cent, would see an additional cost of £150m to £200m a year across the sector.

Pension contributions increase in April; colleges should be aware that most of their TPS staff will face the second round of increases in their contribution rates from that date.

Those TPS members in colleges with pay freezes will have less take-home pay at the end of April. Most LGPS members will face increases from April 2014.

It should also be noted that in the longer term, employers may well face increases in their contributions from the current 14.1 per cent.

The Department for Education states the employer contribution cap will be set “at 2 per cent above the employer contribution rate calculated ahead of the introduction of the new scheme in 2015”.

Another issue relates to employer’s national insurance contribution rebate for contracted out staff — that is, those enrolled on the TPS and LGPS.

The Treasury has stated it will remove the 5.3 per cent existing contracted-out rebate which public service pension scheme members and their employers enjoy — 1.6 per cent rebate for employees and 3.7 per cent rebate for employers.

The Treasury has not issued a date for the closure, but the rebate will close when the new higher state pension is introduced, which may not be for a few years yet.

The abolition of this would result in additional costs to the sector of between £120m and £160m a year.

Robert Russell
financial adviser to the FE sector

“Just raising expectations through targeted inspections will not be enough”



New Ofsted inspections to start this week

Matthew Coffey, Ofsted’s national director for learning and skills, writes for *FE Week* about the issues raised for providers.

It has been an eventful year for all of us involved in the FE and skills sector. In July, for example, we held our first learning and skills lecture at City and Islington College where the panel discussions, chaired by Baroness Sally Morgan, got to the heart of many issues affecting our sector.

Joining the discussion was Frank McLoughlin, principal of City and Islington College; Neil Carberry, director of employment and skills at the Confederation of British Industry; and Professor Ken Spours, head of the department of continuing education at the Institute of Education.

And it will come as no surprise that the new common inspection framework for FE and skills will start this week. From now on, providers can no longer be judged as “satisfactory”. Instead, we are replacing the category with “requires improvement”.

At last week’s AoC seminar, several HMI-facilitated workshops allowed delegates to explore the new framework in detail.

Sir Michael Wilshaw, the chief inspector, recognised the quality of our providers.

He said that he was impressed by learners and the wide range of courses, from entry level to degrees. He had often heard the FE and skills sector described as the “Cinderella” of education, but he did not share that view.

“Nothing could be further from the truth,” he said. “I have no doubt about the importance of FE, the range of learners you serve, the talent and commitment of the people working within the sector or the expectations now being placed on you to help the country out of the depths of recession.”

Like me, Sir Michael was struck by the differing in standards, both in providers he visited and our inspection findings.

He recognised our risk-assessed approach

had targeted inspections on providers where there was the greatest concern. This inevitably led to a more negative grade profile than if we had kept using our previous approach.

The conference was also an opportunity to underline our concern about the quality of teaching and an undue focus on passing qualifications without ensuring that learners were sufficiently challenged or adequately prepared for the next stage in their lives.

In September last year, there were more than 350 learning and skills providers judged as satisfactory in their most recent inspection. Sixty-nine colleges had been judged satisfactory for two consecutive inspections, including 29 that had been judged satisfactory for a third time.

Just raising expectations through targeted inspections, however, will not be enough.

Ofsted has a greater role here. We can complement the work of those bodies charged with bringing about improvement and invest more of our resources to supporting providers to improve.

I will provide more detail on our plans in November.

Inspections under the new framework will start this week with a much-reduced notification period of two days. We launch Learner View, our online tool designed to enable learners to tell us their views about their college or provider, at the same time.

And, of course, as the new academic year begins, the production of the chief inspector’s annual report gathers pace.

This year’s report is much more interactive to enable greater access to the vast body of knowledge collected from inspections last year.

I look forward to seeing all FE professionals out and about, either on inspection or at the packed conference programme we have committed to attend throughout the autumn term.

Matthew Coffey
Ofsted’s national director for learning and skills

FE Week Experts

Who's fooling who over the GCSE fiasco?

Professor Daniel Khan OBE, chief executive of OCN London, considers this year's change in grade boundaries.

Since thousands of 16-year-olds collected their GCSE results, the unprecedented decline in A* to C grades has hardly been out of the press. For the first time in the history of the qualification, the percentage of students gaining these grades has fallen. At the fore of the fiasco is the altering of the grade boundaries for English between January and June.

The consequence of such interference was that a student who received a C grade in January could have received a D in June, with the exact same mark. Altering the boundaries in the same academic year has been labelled "scandalous" by some teachers and head teachers and will undoubtedly have serious implications for the futures of thousands of young people.

Ofqual immediately responded that the June grades were "fair" and the issue lies in the January examinations. The grades awarded in January were "generous" and, as a result, in June the boundaries were raised and fewer students achieved the crucial C grade.

Yet, contradictory to this, recently leaked letters reveal that Ofqual ordered the awarding organisation, Edexcel, to alter the June grades just two weeks before the results were published. They did so amid fears that too

many students were going to get C grades.

Education Secretary Michael Gove has offered his sympathy to students who have not received the grades that they expected — he has even admitted that students were treated unfairly — but has ruled out ministerial intervention.

Nevertheless, the remarkable decision to move grade boundaries between January and June has sparked suspicions of pressure directly from Gove. Since assuming office he has taken a firm stand against grade inflation and has often spoken of the "dumbing down" of exams. It seems more than a coincidence that the first decline in the number of A* to C grades happened this year — who's fooling who?

Regardless of whether Gove did directly put pressure on Ofqual, the fuss this August raises questions over the purpose of education. It highlights the direction which this Government appears to be heading and its keenness to use grades as a sole measure of success.

Gove's vision for the future of GCSEs recommends the introduction of one exam per subject, provided by a single board, without assessment by coursework. His desire to implement a traditional examination system, which harks back to O-levels, will produce a certain culture within secondary education. Such a focus on exams, and allusions to the former system, has led to many accusing Gove of being stuck in the past and reluctant



“What has happened raises questions over the very purpose of education”

to adopt more innovative ideas.

Exams test a student's ability to study in a very specific way. Under the Gove doctrine the general aim of education would be to prepare students to absorb as much information as possible and then recount it all in just a few hours at the end of the academic year. Other measures of ability, such as independent pieces of coursework, would be discounted. Arguably this would assess just one form of intelligence and risk reverting back to the two-tier system where students who performed less well in exams were left behind.

The direction of the Government, and the furor over the GCSE grades, begs the questions — should secondary education require students to acquire knowledge solely to perform well in exams, knowledge that they may use little of in the future, or should it prepare them for the workplace and equip them with skills for life?

Further, is intelligence a single entity or is it multi-faceted and expressed in a variety of ways?

If the latter is true then surely using exams as the key driver behind learning is somewhat one-dimensional. Using exams as the primary way to test the performance of students fails to consider that there is more to education than out-performing classmates in the number of A* to Cs achieved.

The fools in this fiasco will be awarding organisations if they allow politicians or regulators to dictate their mission, values and ethos. They need to ensure that learners are fairly assessed and given the opportunity to enhance the quality of their lives and enrich their community through the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

*Professor Daniel Khan OBE
chief executive, OCN London*

Advertorial

It's an exciting time to join Seevic College

Seevic College is hunting for a new principal and CEO (see also page 12). Recruitment boss Bill Wardle explains what they're looking for.

As Seevic College begins its search for a new Principal and CEO, it can reflect both on bold decisions over recent years and clear ambition for the future. The new leader will have a strong and developing base from which to work. The College is clear that it intends to find someone who knows what excellent quality looks like in order to continue its journey to Outstanding and has the creative and commercial acumen required to build and diversify the College's presence in Essex.

Sarah Wright is making a move after three highly successful years at Seevic College and will become the new Principal of Central Sussex College. Of her time at Seevic, Sarah Wright comments: "I am very proud of the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and success rates, and have been especially appreciative of the dedication and clear strategic focus of the College's Corporation.

It is a very exciting time to be joining Seevic. We have Department for Education approval for Seevic Sponsorship of a Studio School in the centre of Basildon and a total refurbish-

ment of the largest of our three campuses in Benfleet is underway."

Seevic College is characterised by taking strong decisions over the years that have heightened its impact and profile. Firstly, in 2009, the decision to re-designate from a Sixth Form College to a General Further Education College enabled diversification and creative approaches to new markets in adult and employer responsive and higher education provision.

This was a recognition of the path the College was already taking. At the same time, the College has been able to sustain a significant and successful Sixth Form profile. Seevic is now a very interesting multi-campus College, appealing to a variety of students across the academic and vocational spectrum with big ambitions for the future.

Corporation chair David Palmer said: "A very clear thinking Corporation and strong senior team who have carried out a thorough strategic options review and are confident that their five year Strategic Plan will result in the achievement of their ambitious outcomes". Secondly, and more recently, the broader nature of Seevic College's provision and its close connection to local communities' and employers' needs have enabled the College to map out a future path of development and growth that is



not based on federation or merger.

Seevic College has a revenue base of £17m per year; 480 staff, a full-time student population of more than 3,000 and sound finances.

With rising Success Rates, improving quality of teaching and learning and ambitious redevelopment plans and new initiatives, Seevic College's opinion is that local provision is enhanced through diversity and the commit-

ment of institutions to respond positively to the messages and opportunities presented by shifts in Government priorities and funding streams.

Seevic College prides itself on its agility and readiness to excel in order to overcome current sector challenges to better meet the needs of both local and regional communities.

*Bill Wardle, senior consultant at
College Leadership Service*

FE Week campus round-up

Stockton Riverside College welcomes Duke



The Duke of York opened a £12m state-of-the-art sixth form building at Stockton Riverside College on September 5.

The first students through the doors were greeted with a bright, Tardis-like building, full of state-of-the-art equipment, providing them with opportunities that were impossible in their old building.

The new facilities include a geology lab, a TV studio, digital media rooms, and a central sound recording studio.

The new £6m SRC Sports Centre has a climbing wall, all-weather pitch, badminton and trampoline facilities — all available for students and the local community.

The students' learning experience is at the building's heart. A central learning area with student help desk can be seen from all levels

of the building as a result of two atria, which allows light to flood in.

Mark White, vice-chair of the SRC FE Corporation, said: "The pride of the staff and students who attend SRC Bede Sixth Form, their loyalty to this area, the culture and ethos of this small sixth-form college — everything that they stand for is represented in the design of this wonderful building.

"It's a very special place, not just because of its design and the fantastic facilities it has provided, but for what it represents for its people and the wider community. We are extremely proud of it and thrilled that its importance to this area has been recognised with this official opening by The Duke of York."

Coleg Gwent goes to Paralympic Games



Wheelchair rugby proved a highlight for dozens of students when they visited the Paralympic Games in London.

Coleg Gwent sport students were at the Olympic Park to cheer on athletes in wheelchair rugby, goal ball, seven-a-side football and wheelchair tennis.

Sophie Walters, who was one of 33 to make

the trip from Newport, in Wales, said: "It was really exciting to watch the Paralympic events especially the wheelchair rugby."

Sport lecturer Mererid Dark said: "The experience was tremendous, one I will never forget. The Paralympic athletes made me feel very humble and proud to be a part of the event."



Chesterfield College showcase centre

Chesterfield College's fabrication and welding department has been heralded as a national showcase centre by ABC Awards, becoming the first in the UK to gain the accolade.

The initiative from ABC Awards celebrates centres that it feels represents excellent delivery of the entire suite of fabrication and welding qualifications and whose students achieve the right level of qualification. As a national showcase centre, the department can now act in an advisory and guidance role to other centres across the country.

Bernadette Done, business development manager for national pr and customer satisfaction at ABC Awards said: "The ABC

Awards showcase centre initiative was established so we can point new and struggling centres in the direction of established centres that we know have good working practices and are willing to share ideas, offer help and give advice.

"As Chesterfield College has worked with ABC Awards for a number of years, in particular, the relationship between ABC and the fabrication and welding sector has been mutually supportive, we feel that by including Chesterfield as a showcase centre will strengthen this working relationship further. We are confident we can direct centres to Ray Peet, student support manager for engineering, and his team at the College for help and advice."

MidKent supports former criminal



A former armed robber who spent eight-and-a-half years behind bars has started his own plumbing business with the help of the college where he trained while on day-release.

Lee Saunders, studied plumbing for two years at MidKent College when he was in prison. Since his release in July he has won two contracts worth £1,520 to work on the college's plumbing as part of its £25m refurbishment.

He said that he took up plumbing because he knew he was going to be behind bars for a long time and wanted to learn a trade.

"Having my studies to focus on has turned my life around really. I've come out of prison a different person," he said.

"It's brilliant. The college has helped me so much. I've a lot to thank them for."



South Cheshire pitches in for team

College bosses have played their part in helping Cheshire footballers score a new home.

A new pitch at South Cheshire College, in been with, plays host to Betley Football Club's home games.

The team, which plays in the Staffordshire Saturday County League, had been on the lookout for a new base over the summer.

Several former college sports students also play for Betley and the college's community leisure chief, Graham Chafer, said: "We are delighted that Betley Football Club are using the new grass pitch on a Saturday and they are benefiting from the set-up.

"Other clubs are also keen to use our facilities which are available for hire in the evenings."



Stratford College performs at BT Live event

Midland college students shared a stage with Brit music stars Blur, Snow Patrol, The Stereophonics and Duran Duran. Seven of Stratford-Upon-Avon College's extended diploma in music class were picked to perform at the BT London Live event in Hyde Park.

The event, part of the London 2012 Games closing celebrations, saw the students create their own band Strange Days as part of a project in tribute to American band The Doors.

They had been chosen from hundreds of bands from across the county by promoters Live Nation after they handed in a demo produced by music technology students

using the college recording studio.

Singer Ben Paveley (above, middle) was also "spotted" by Pete Webber, from Live Nation artistic development team — and got to do an extra set of his own acoustic compositions.

The college's programme area co-ordinator for music, James Maiden, said: "This has been a fantastic experience for the students and an honour for them to be a part of a once-in-a-lifetime event linked to the Olympics."

Stratford College offers music and music technology provision at level two, level three and a new HND in music and a HNC in music business and management.



North West Alliance Learning awards

North West apprentices and business learners came in for praise at the 20th annual Alliance Learning awards.

Thirteen prizes were presented at the ceremony, hosted by Bolton-based alliance chief executive Steve Whitehead.

Among the honours were apprentice of the year, a childcare apprentice award and an adult learner award.

Mr Whitehead said: "The awards are a fantastic way to celebrate the achievements

of our top learners, but I would also like to extend my congratulations to each and every business and individual who has invested time and money in developing their skills and extending their knowledge with Alliance Learning.

"I'm truly honoured to be surrounded by so many dedicated and forward thinking people, and want to extend my thanks and admiration to each and every person who has achieved something this year."

BIG support for Middlesbrough College winning their first anti-bullying award



Middlesbrough College has picked up the UK's first BIG anti-bullying award.

The Bullying Intervention Group is a social enterprise, created to administer the award for schools, colleges and services for young people.

To earn the award, colleges must show they are working to crackdown on the issue, employ consistent good practice, actively include youngsters in their anti-bullying work and ensure every young person can fulfill their potential without fear of being bullied.

Suze Clarke, student liaison officer at the

college, said: "We're really pleased our work against bullying has been recognised."

"The BIG award is a national award which recognises that our bullying prevention and intervention work is consistent, comprehensive and thorough."

Val McFarlane, BIG director, said: "Middlesbrough College has gone way beyond our expectations and has really used innovative and creative ideas to stimulate interest amongst their students about bullying, racism, acceptance and friendship."



Japanese students on cloud nine over airline course at Bournemouth and Poole College

Seven jet-setting students have been in Bournemouth this summer learning the skills of airline cabin crew.

After three weeks' intensive training at Bournemouth and Poole College's Lansdowne campus, and working on British Airways' cabin simulators, they were due fly home to Osaka, in Japan.

All seven hope one day to be soaring across the world using the skills they honed in Bournemouth to serve long-haul passengers.

The college claims to have developed a global reputation for training cabin crew, having forged strong links with Japanese colleges.

Student Shoko Koga said: "We had a wonderful time and learned so much."

"The college staff made us feel so welcome. We fell in love with Bournemouth and it's lovely climate. Maybe one day we will be serving Bournemouth people on long-haul flights to our own country."

Want your college or training provider to appear on these pages?

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

Go on – take the pill and join the tablet revolution, says Clay

Holly Welham

@hollywelham

The tablet computer is not new. It's been with us for around 40 years, but only recently has it had an impact - and a big one - on learning and teaching in FE institutions.

The Association for Learning Technology's (ALT) annual conference in Manchester was a chance to debate its use and its future.

“Virtually every educational institution I've been to in the past 12 months has been talking about tablets”

James Clay (right), the information, learning and technology manager at Gloucestershire College, asked questions such as what sort of learning activities and scenarios are making best use of the tablet? And, where will tablets take us?

“Virtually every educational institution I've been to in the past 12 months has been talking about tablets,” he said. “They are in classrooms, in libraries, in workrooms and in the hands of learners.”

When he later spoke to *FE Week* he criticised the unnecessary use of pilots and projects to test the device, arguing that learning providers often replicated research already carried out by another institution.

“The core reason why we use pilots is because we can't afford a roll-out,” he said. “I have to admit, I'm not a great fan of the word pilot or project, because it implies it's going to end. To me, if you're introducing a new technology it means that you're changing the way that society works from then on. If you do a 12-month pilot, it implies that at the end of the 12 months you're going to stop using it.”

To stress his point, Mr Clay used the example of a free e-book collection his college was given by JISC, an organisation that champions the use of digital technology in education.

“I remember talking to someone who asked which group we were going to pilot [the

collection] with. I said ‘no, we're going to roll it out across the whole college and we're going to target everybody with the e-books’, because the research had already been done.”

Only a few people used e-books when the college introduced them, but the right structures were in place when they became part of mainstream and their use rocketed.

Mr Clay told delegates that it was key to think where technology would be in the next five to 10 years, rather than where it was now.

“You've got to focus away from the here and now,” he said. “Just because it's popular, just because it's mainstream, doesn't mean that's its the future, it means it's already here.”

Mr Clay added that it was not about trying to predict new technological devices, but rather considering what was going to happen with society in the future.

In terms of FE, he believed that technology would remove the geographical boundaries between colleges.

“Colleges can be anywhere,” he said. “At the moment you go to your local college because it's local, because geography is important.

“But in a few years' time, when people have got these connections, geography will be less important. It will still be a factor; people will continue to go to their local college, but for many it will become less important.”

He said the “smarter colleges” were already looking into this. “They're getting their name about in other locations, competing directly with local colleges. It's about awareness-raising, so that when people think ‘I need to do a college course’, the one they think about is not their local one.

“We cannot afford to let learners fall down by the wayside.

“Technology is a solution to that problem, because it enables us to provide a much greater depth and richness of resources, different kind of learning experiences, and new ways of assessing learners that will allow us to ensure that our learners are successful.”

Mr Clay reinforced how tablets could help with a student's learning: “It's about personalisation.

“A learner who missed last week's class or didn't quite grasp the outcomes, can go on their device to go back to last week's lecture notes and assignment materials.

“Likewise, the learner who read the textbook and thought ‘this is really easy’, is being directed to go forwards.”



FE Week recommends

Due to the time of year it was difficult for people from the FE sector to attend the conference, but live recordings of sessions and materials are available online from the link below:

<http://www.alt.ac.uk/alt-c-2012/participate-online>

If you have a spare hour here are some of the keynote speeches and sessions we recommend you listen to and download.

Eric Mazur: The scientific approach to teaching: Research as a basis for course design

James Clay: How are tablets being used in learning and teaching? What is the impact? Where are we going and where might we finish up?

Aaron Sloman: What is computational thinking? Who needs it? Why? How can it be learnt?

Steve Bunce: Knitting – a learning technology to dye for? Can knitting develop programming skills in schools and prepare computer scientists of the future?

Workshop: Designing tomorrow's curriculum today

Q&A with Maren Deepwell, Association of Learning Technology chief executive



The conference is called “A confrontation with reality”. Why did you choose this title?

The quote comes from a John F Kennedy speech in 1962. He was talking about confronting reality, having a new era, people working together, inspiring each other. Our conference co-chairs chose that as the theme because they think that's the situation we're in now.

There are so many cuts in all different ways, lots of new challenges, lots of young people whose lives really need the skills that further education gives, and lots of learners who might need to re-train.

Further education has a really important role in helping people make the change in their lives that they need to and that's what the conference is about. It's for us to come together and say this is what we're facing, we're ready for it, and we're going to try to help each other move across that problem

Why have you organised the conference?

It's about meeting people and finding out what really works. Technology moves so fast that you don't have a choice – you've got to keep up with it, because your learners will, no matter what generation they're from. That's what we're trying to facilitate with the conference. It's across sectors, it's international and it's very practical. Whatever you're interested in you can find a session about it.

A large portion of the FE sector won't be there as it's the start of their term. How have you made sure that they don't miss out?

We do online sessions, which are free to attend. Recordings of sessions are available and all our publications are open access, so that you don't have to pay to download any of the conference materials. It's all freely available, even the research papers.

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ALT-C 2012: A confrontation with Reality was held at the University of Manchester, 11 - 13 September 2012

Pictures by Holly Welham



leek college

Principal of Buxton and Leek College

Competitive salary with benefits



A NEW College and a unique challenge!

The Context. Buxton and Leek Colleges have merged to form an exciting new entity within the University of Derby Group. Combined, we will have almost 4,000 learners and revenue of almost £10m. Opportunities for the existing Colleges will be extended within the University Group.

The outline intention is both to strengthen the FE brand in the region and to take full advantage of a co-ordinated approach to provision, to the greater benefit of learners, communities and employers. Operating as a single College, the new institution will operate from both sites at Buxton and Leek.

The new College will have a new identity. At the same time, it will embody the Values of the University of Derby Group with particular regard to Quality, Valuing People, Customer Focus, Opportunity and Openness and Challenge and Innovation.

The Role. A different and refreshed approach to provision mandates that leadership of the new College will have interesting features. The new Principal will be charged with establishing a single College environment on two historic sites; protecting and growing provision; complying with

the strategic and operational priorities of the University Group and being fully alert to all policy and funding shifts, creating challenge and opportunity for the College's sector. The new College will be distinct because of its structure and context. Equally, it will be characterised by high impact and achievement.

The Person. To succeed in this new role, the successful candidate will have vision, a developed understanding of sector dynamics and the capacity to make a distinctive contribution within the University Group.



The new Principal will be able to establish a single College culture and also to communicate in an effective and exemplary manner with communities and stakeholders. If you feel you can meet this exacting specification then we want to hear from you.

We are working with College Leadership Services on this important appointment.

Please contact Helen Anderson for an application pack: handerson@collegeleadership.co.uk or 0115 911 1117, or visit www.collegeleadership.co.uk/current_appointments.asp for further information about this post.

College Leadership Services
Expertise in FE

The closing date for this post is 12pm on Friday 5th October 2012. First interviews will be held on Wednesday 24th October, with second interviews taking place on Wednesday 31st October 2012.

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The Context:

Seevic College is a values driven organisation, committed to playing a full part in the regeneration of South Essex. We plan to be an Outstanding College by 2015.

We have an annual turnover of £17m, 480 staff and over 3,000 learners. We operate from three campuses at Benfleet and Basildon and our Strategic Plan is geared to addressing disadvantage, as well as the opportunity to expand higher order skills and Higher Education.

Change is already underway at Seevic College, with rising success rates and a complete renovation of the largest of our three campuses in progress. Our New Campus Basildon Studio School is on schedule to open in September 2013.

You are welcome to have an informal discussion with the current Principal, Sarah Wright. Appointments to speak with Sarah should be made via her PA, Theresa Cope, on 01268 882602.

The Role:

Our Strategic Plan expects continuous improvement against clear targets. Awareness of the new competitive environment for colleges and strong commercial acumen will be important traits of our future Principal. You will work with and develop a very able and committed senior team.

The Person:

You will be able to recognise and seize opportunities, and inspire people to act innovatively. Your communication and people skills will be exceptional. You will be very highly motivated, energetic and have an over-riding desire to work as part of a team. Your belief in supplying an outstanding service to our students, employers and communities will be unshakeable.



CLOSING DATE:
12pm Friday 28th September 2012

INTERVIEWS:
Mon. 15th & Tues. 16th October 2012

We are working in partnership with College Leadership Services on this important appointment.

Please contact Helen Anderson for an application pack: handerson@collegeleadership.co.uk or 0115 911 1117, or visit www.collegeleadership.co.uk/current_appointments.asp for further information about this post.

College Leadership Services
Expertise in FE



Assistant Principal, Academic Studies

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Relocation Package Available Ref. TC115

Tameside College is the leading provider of post 16 education in the Borough of Tameside which lies to the east of Manchester. With over 6,000 students, the College provides a broad range of pre and post 16 provision and higher level programmes. Hyde Clarendon Sixth Form College is part of the Tameside College family and over the past 3 years has consistently achieved the best A Level success rates in the Borough. The College sponsors Droylsden Academy in East Manchester.

Tameside College is seeking to appoint an Assistant Principal with strategic responsibility for our academic, advanced and higher level curriculum.

Are you:

- A curriculum specialist with ambitions to become the strategic lead for curriculum in a large further education college?
- A strategic thinker who knows how to turn that vision into deliverable plans?
- A good networker who can guide the College through challenges and opportunities facing a dynamic further education college?
- A calm, confident professional adept at inspiring others to achieve the best for students through the application of your exceptional understanding of curriculum and of students' barriers to success?

To be successful in this role, you will need excellent people management skills, experience of managing a diverse curriculum, an understanding of what it takes to deliver outstanding results, and the ability to drive curriculum innovation and growth. You will also have a successful track record in leading significant and quantifiable change in further education.

If you would like to talk informally about this position before applying, please call Jenny Worsdale, Deputy Principal on 0161 908 6699.

Closing date: Noon, Monday 1st October 2012.

For further details apply online at www.tameside.ac.uk/jobs.asp quoting ref. TC115.

Human Resources, Tameside College, Beaufort Road, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 6NX.

Telephone: 0161 908 6643. Minicom: 0161 908 6610.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



**Want to inspire people to
achieve their potential? WE DO!**



These are exciting times for Preston College. A new Principal and Executive Leadership Team are driving forward an Enterprise College vision, providing learners with the skills, attitudes, behaviours and qualifications to realise their ambitions; clients with bespoke training created to meet the current and future needs of their sector; and staff with an exciting, entrepreneurial environment in which to work. With these changes comes opportunity.

Resources Directorate

Assistant Head of Campus Development - PC/AHCD

Salary: Up to £41,467 per annum (SCP 43) Hours: Full time 1.0FTE

As a member of the Department Management Team, the successful applicant will provide effective leadership and management to ensure our Campus provides high quality facilities and services, in an environment in which our learners, and staff can achieve their full potential.

With a relevant degree/ professional qualification or equivalent work experience, and an accredited project management qualification, you will have a successful record of delivering building projects and infrastructure refurbishment, preferably gained within an educational estate.

Closing date for applications: Friday 12 October 2012 at 12 noon

Further details on these and other opportunities are available on the College website www.preston.ac.uk

We welcome applications from all sections of the community. For further information and additional vacancies please go to www.preston.ac.uk or telephone 01772 225676 and request an information pack.

**TOGETHER WE CAN
MAKE IT HAPPEN**



**South
London
Business**



ADMIN ASSISTANT – BUSINESS SKILLS

Location: Croydon

Salary: £12,000 - £15,360 p.a.

To assist in administering a range of training contracts and projects. Dealing with data entry/submissions and working with sub-contractors/associates

Experience of PICS system a distinct advantage

Send CV and covering letter to:

j.harries@southlondonbusiness.co.uk

CLOSING DATE: 26TH SEPTEMBER 2012



Business Development Advisers £24-28k (x2)

We are an independent, QAA and Ofqual licensed national awarding organisation which was formerly known as OCN South East Region.

We are seeking to appoint 2 full-time Business Development Advisers to:

- ☀ Promote the use of our qualifications and services to new and existing customers across London, the South of England and beyond.
- ☀ Manage a portfolio of customer accounts
- ☀ Provide related advice and support to our recognised centres

Experience in, and knowledge of, education or training and in particular of qualifications and awarding organisations, would be a distinct advantage, but an applicant with the right level of personal education and the potential to get up to speed with the educational context would be able to apply for this post.

For further details and how to apply visit the jobs board on www.feweek.co.uk

Deadline: 5.00pm on Thursday 27 September



GRIMSBY INSTITUTE GROUP

Business Advisor (Creative & Media)

£16,200 per annum pro rata

Fixed Term until 31st March 2013

Ref: G228

Group Head of E Learning

£35,000 per annum

Ref: G240

To lead and develop E Learning across the Group, including participating in the delivery of staff training and development, contributing to the development and implementation of the Group's IT/ILT and E Learning strategy.

Learner Mentor

£18,382 per annum

Ref: G000

Advanced Learner Mentor

£19,771 per annum

Ref: G000

Apply online at:

www.latestvacancies.com/grimsby/

**Closing date for all the above
19th September 2012**

Academy Manager - Business (Ref: 023B)**Academy Manager - Media and Digital Industries (Ref: 024B)**

Full-time - £32,367 to £36,937

We are looking for two dynamic people who possess strong teaching and curriculum management abilities to provide outstanding leadership for two defined academies. The ideal candidates will hold a teaching qualification (eg PGCE or Certificate in Education), and have knowledge of employability skills development and delivery within a broad range of curriculum.

Closing date: Wednesday 26 September

Interview date: Academy Manager - Business - Wednesday 10 October
Academy Manager - Media and Digital Industries - Tuesday 16 October

If you would like to apply for any of these vacancies, please go to www.cityplym.ac.uk/jobs

If you have any questions about applying for vacancies with City College Plymouth, please contact Human Resources on 01752 305322 or e-mail: recruitment@cityplym.ac.uk

City College Plymouth is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. • The College is an equal opportunities employer

www.cityplym.ac.uk/jobs

SALES EXECUTIVE

An exciting opportunity to join the team at FE Week

The only newspaper and interactive website dedicated to the further education sector

£20k (£25k OTE)

Based in London

To apply, contact
Chardelle Mason on
020 8123 4891

Deadline:
October 1

CAN YOU MAKE OUR COLLEGE GREAT?



John Ruskin College has undergone a fantastic transformation over the last three years. Now we have outstanding learner success rates and destinations, outstanding teaching and learning and outstanding leadership and management, we are now ready to make our College truly great.

We are focused on forging a new way as a small but high quality designated Sixth Form College. We offer programmes to students from the age of 14 upwards to foundation learning, level 2, level 3 and Higher Education, including Vocational Diplomas, NVQs, Apprenticeships and HNCs. Our staff salaries are competitive with generous annual leave and conditions. We have very high standards and higher expectations of both ourselves and colleagues. As we are expanding we have some amazing opportunities created through a reorganisation of our business services.

NETWORK MANAGER

£36,591 to £38,308 per annum

Post no. S07.12

To lead the IT team. Strategically oversee the development of the College's IT systems and ensuring their continual effective operation.

SENIOR NETWORK TECHNICIAN

£24,879 to £26,446 per annum

Post no. S11.12

To ensure that faults and queries are proactively addressed, ensuring IT systems support the College's business.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS INTEGRATION & SUPPORT OFFICER

£24,879 - £26,446 per annum

Post no. S22.12

To develop and oversee bespoke software to support transformational learning and business systems.

FINANCE MANAGER

£24,879 to £26,446 per annum

Post no. S19.12

To lead the finance department and ensure that financial systems and processes effectively support the College.

FINANCE ASSISTANT

£17,456 to £18,013 per annum

Post no. S20.12

APPRENTICESHIP MANAGER

£42,464 to £44,952

Post no. S21.12

To lead and deliver on the apprenticeship programmes, gaining new business and building strong links with employers.

The closing date for applications is 1st October 2012.

We recognise and encourage the potential of a diverse workforce and positively welcome applications from people from black and ethnic minority communities.

John Ruskin College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All applications are subject to enhanced CRB clearance.

To learn more about these posts please visit our website @ www.johnruskin.ac.uk.



Selsdon Park Road, South Croydon, CR2 8JJ
Tel: 020 8651 1131 Fax: 020 8651 4011
Email: recruitment@johnruskin.ac.uk
www.johnruskin.ac.uk

Judged OUTSTANDING for learner destinations



Deputy Principal, Teaching & Learning Up to £105k (including PRP)

This is your opportunity to play a key role in one of the country's largest and most exciting colleges. Leeds City College is a highly successful college with over 17,000 staff, 40,000 students, and an annual turnover of over £90m. It has recently had successful IQER and Ofsted inspections, and is now pressing on with the mission to be an exceptional college.

Joining the College's Executive Leadership Team, your key responsibility will be to drive strategic and operational curriculum improvements via the development of innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

The College has aspirations to be exceptional, so you should be a passionate and determined individual who feels responsible for the delivery of a high learning experience for every student.

For further details and to apply, please visit www.leedscitycollege.ac.uk/jobs or contact HR on 0113 308 7900

Closing date: 12 noon Wednesday 26th September 2012
Interviews: Wednesday 3rd & Thursday 4th October 2012

Leeds City College is committed to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. All successful applicants are, therefore, required to complete an enhanced criminal records disclosure.

All applicants will be treated fairly irrespective of race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age. The college actively welcomes applications from all sections of the community.



play your part
leedscitycollege.ac.uk



Don't forget to
check out our
jobs board
online at:
www.feweek.co.uk

NEW CAMPUS BASILDON



Principal Designate circa £75,000

Do you have the ambition to inspire the next generation?

The Context

The Studio School will open in September 2013 and be based in Basildon. It will provide a unique opportunity to engage young people aged 14-19 of all abilities, who would not otherwise reach their full potential in a traditional school environment. It will provide a high quality, inspirational, personalised learning experience for students, focussed on supporting the transition from school to work. It will support local priorities to raise aspiration and achievement within the community, and tackle the challenge of skills shortages within the area. The curriculum offer will combine academic and vocational qualifications aligned to local employer base.

The Role

This is an exciting prospect for a self motivated professional to lead the provision and team of a Studio School. You will be joining the Academy Trust at a time of the development that provides you with a real opportunity to help us to shape and realise the ambitious plans we have for our learners and our Studio School. You will be leading a team of dedicated and highly-skilled staff in committing to a regeneration of education in a provision that encapsulates all learners and their needs.

The Person

You will be committed to excellence in teaching and learning. You will be an ambitious and experienced leader with highly developed business acumen. The vision of excellence will be clear and strong and you will be able to develop and motivate teams to deliver the levels of service our learners, employers and communities deserve.

We are an equal opportunities employer and value diversity. All appointments are based solely on the merit and abilities of each applicant regardless of age, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic origin or disability. We are committed to safeguarding and promote the welfare of all learners and expect all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be required to undertake appropriate checks as well as providing proof of your right to work in the UK.

The closing date for the above post is 11 October 2012. Selection will be held on 18 October 2012.

For details of the above post, and an application form, please contact the Seevic College Human Resources dept. on: 01268 882607 quoting the post, or by Email: personnel@seevic-college.ac.uk

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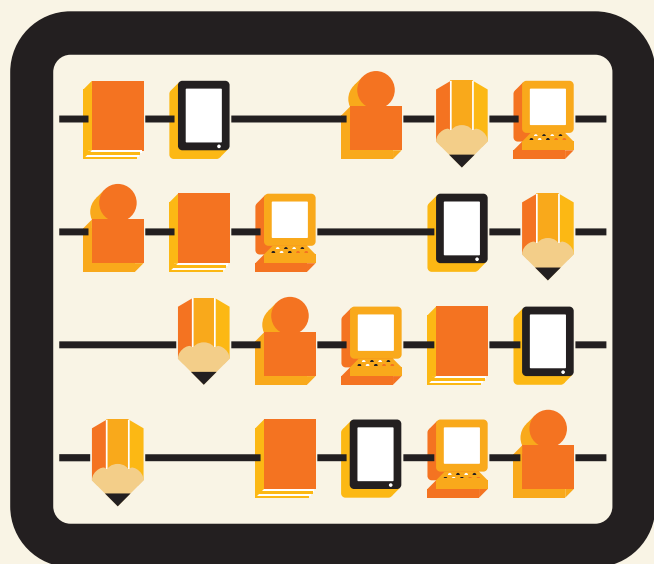
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Supporting standards

Pearson. Better learning for everyone, everywhere. You may not realise it, but you've probably been working with Pearson for many years. Our goal is to help people make progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. Through our expertise in education and our commitment to high standards, we have a built a reputation for improving learning through innovation and the use of technology. We do this in many ways, all made possible because of the

breadth of our capabilities and our commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of education in all we do.

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Whether you want learning resources that are engaging and effective, or highly respected assessments and qualifications that focus on excellence, you'll find these at Pearson. Every day we learn lessons big and small. 'Always learning' is not just what we believe, it's what we do.

Learn more at www.pearson.com/uk/alwayslearning

ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

FE Week Sudoku challenge

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | | | | 5 | | | | 7 |
| 8 | | | 9 | | 4 | | | 6 |
| | 1 | 4 | | | | 5 | 9 | |
| 1 | | 8 | | | | 7 | | 9 |
| | | | 7 | | 9 | | | |
| 9 | | 5 | | | | 4 | | 1 |
| | 8 | 3 | | | | 1 | 7 | |
| 7 | | | 5 | | 3 | | | 8 |
| 4 | | | | 7 | | | | 2 |

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | 9 | | |
| 2 | 6 | | | 7 | | 5 | | |
| | | | | 4 | 3 | | | 8 |
| | | | | | 4 | 6 | | 3 |
| 3 | | | 2 | 7 | | | | 4 |
| 1 | | 6 | 8 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | 4 | 5 | | | | |
| | | 8 | | 9 | | | 5 | 6 |
| | | 2 | | | | | | |

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week's solutions

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| 6 | 8 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 4 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 1 |
| 8 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 9 | 8 |
| 1 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 4 | 7 |
| 3 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 5 |
| 7 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 9 |
| 5 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 3 |

Difficulty:
EASY

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 8 | 7 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 |
| 3 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 2 |
| 9 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 7 |
| 5 | 2 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 5 | 8 |
| 8 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| 6 | 5 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 1 |
| 7 | 4 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 9 |

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week's* biggest and smallest fan!



"Mostly this week I have celebrating our best Olympic and Paralympic teams ever"

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter @daniellinford